

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RON
BERGMANN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ron Bergmann and thank him for his contributions to the Chaffee County Sheriff's Department and community. Ron will always be remembered as a dedicated leader and guardian of the community, and as he celebrates his retirement, let it be known that this will be a great loss for a community that has relied on him for his knowledge and wisdom in times of hardship and prosperity.

Ron was elected Sheriff of Chaffee County eight years ago and has served in this position with great diligence and commitment to his fellow Coloradans. As a former law enforcement officer, I know the challenges and hardships our peace officers face every day. The greatest honor bestowed on these brave men and women is not awards and promotions, but the maintenance of integrity. Through his responses to render assistance and guidance, Ron has always maintained his composure and served in his capacity with the utmost professionalism and compassion.

Ron has been an active member in the civic community by dedicating his time and energy to noble community activities throughout the area. He serves on the Chaffee County Child Protection and Child Evaluation Teams, as a board member for programs such as "Kid's Campus" and "Build a Generation," and the Chaffee County Fairboard. He continues to serve the area's younger generation as a 4H leader and as coach for a little league baseball team. In addition, Ron can be found training residents in the prevention of wildfires, forming neighborhood watch programs, lecturing about drug use prevention, and teaching First Aid/CPR to local high schools.

Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned several of the many successes and accomplishments in Ron Bergmann's life, but none compare to his character and dedication to the people of Chaffee County. He is known as a kind soul and caring father and his efforts towards improving the community certainly deserve the recognition of this body of Congress, and this nation. I would like to extend my congratulations on Ron's retirement and wish him and his wife, Sarina, the best in their future endeavors.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH
BIRTHDAY OF LANGSTON HUGHES

HON. JIM RYUN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2002

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th birthday of Langston Hughes, which will take place on February 1, 2002.

Langston Hughes grew up in Topeka, Lawrence and Kansas City, Kansas. His mother, Carrie Hughes, raised him on her own as she worked in the office of Topeka's first African-American lawyer, James H. Guy.

Langston discovered poetry in the eighth grade and published his first poem, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers", shortly after leaving Columbia University. After moving to Harlem he published many works including his first book of poems, "The Weary Blues."

He graduated from Lincoln University in 1929 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. In 1943 he received an honorary doctorate. Both the Guggenheim and Roeswald granted Hughes fellowships and he later accepted assignments as Atlanta University's poet in residence and news correspondent during the Spanish Civil War.

Langston Hughes was a prolific writer. In the forty-odd years between his first book and his death in 1967, he devoted his life to writing and lecturing. He wrote sixteen books of poems, two novels, three collections of short stories and much, much more.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Mr. Langston Hughes for holding strong the belief in equality, for being an influence in the literary community and for being the people's poet.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2002

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, let the RECORD reflect that due to a scheduling conflict, I was unable to be present for votes on Wednesday, January 23, 2002. Had I been present I would have voted YEA on the following: H.R. 700, H.R. 2234, and H. Res. 330. Thank you.

HONORING BROWARD COUNTY
VETERANS

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2002

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Broward County, Florida, World War II Veterans who, on May 1, 2001, received honorary high school diplomas from the Florida Department of Education and Broward County Public Schools. Half a century ago, thousands of young Americans risked their lives to fight for our freedom in World War II, and I applaud the dedication of these veterans during that time of war, as well as their loyalty to the security of the American people.

Many who fought in World War II forfeited their chance to complete high school and continue onto college when, in the prime of their youth, they were asked to save the world. They entered the war as teenagers and those that survived came home as adults. Many veterans had to immediately enter the workforce upon their return to support the families they left behind. Broward County, through this special ceremony, has honored these deserving veterans for their personal sacrifices and their protection of democracy and humanity.

Last year, the State of Florida offered all veterans meeting a general criteria their high school diplomas. Florida's actions are accompanied by similar programs throughout the nation. I commend Broward County Public

Schools and the Florida Department of Education on their efforts to honor these World War II Veterans. These institutions further saluted Broward County veterans by arranging a special graduation ceremony at which the diplomas were received.

Mr. Speaker, World War II interrupted the lives of young America in the 1940's, and now the State of Florida has presented a chance to thank these individuals by recognizing this well-deserved and hard-earned accomplishment.

HONORING SGT. 1ST CLASS
MICHAEL McELHINEY

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 29, 2002

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a heroic native of Kansas City, Missouri, Sergeant 1st Class Michael McElhiney, graduate of Hickman Mills High School and a special honoree tonight at the State of the Union. The US military recently bestowed upon Sgt. McElhiney both a Bronze Star with a "V" for valor and a Purple Heart for his exceptional bravery in battle during the war in Afghanistan. As an officer of the Army's 3rd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group, Sergeant 1st Class Michael McElhiney has heroically served our country. I am extremely honored to recognize Mr. McElhiney and his wife today for their sacrifices for our country.

During his arduous mission in Afghanistan, Sergeant 1st Class McElhiney and his fellow soldiers successfully rescued citizens who had helped resist the Taliban. Traveling with Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan's interim prime minister, the coalition of Afghan and US soldiers helped force the Taliban to retreat. During a US air strike aimed to weaken the Taliban control of Kandahar, Sergeant 1st Class McElhiney was wounded in "friendly fire," a term used by the military to describe injuries resulting from allies' weapons. As a result of this battle in Kandahar, Sergeant 1st Class McElhiney lost his right hand and suffered a collapsed lung. Sergeant 1st Class McElhiney was reunited with his wife after being airlifted to the Marine Corps base at Camp Rhino and then to a US military base in Germany.

Sergeant 1st Class McElhiney is a hero to residents of both Missouri's fifth district and the country. As part of an assignment on American heroes, fifth grade students at Comanche and Westwood View, two local elementary schools in Johnson County, adopted Mr. McElhiney as their hero. The children have sent numerous letters to Sergeant 1st Class McElhiney to thank him for his courage and integrity in battle. In addition, the students are preparing a book for Mr. McElhiney that will be bound and will include their picture on the cover. The bravery and perseverance shown by Mr. McElhiney in Afghanistan exemplify the sacrifices our Armed Forces make every day for our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Sergeant 1st Class Michael McElhiney and his wife as they represent the best of our country. All Americans owe Sergeant 1st Class McElhiney a debt of gratitude for his service to promote freedom and democracy worldwide.